

Dear Friend,

Every child deserves a safe environment. Each year, hundreds of thousands of children are battered by parents or close relatives.

You can help prevent child abuse!

This brochure contains valuable information for the safety and well-being of our children. It is designed to help inform you of signs that a child is being abused.

Please take a few moments to read this brochure for the safety of your own children – or somebody else's. Remember, your awareness and concern can save a child from serious injury or death.

Sincerely,



Rick Keene
Assemblymember, 3rd District

Compliments of
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Child Abuse

What To Watch For



What To Watch For

Physical Abuse

- Bruises, burns, abrasions, lacerations, or swelling caused by other than accidental means.
- Belt buckle marks, handprints, bite marks, and pinches.
- A history of recurring injuries.
- Unexplained injuries, and conflicting explanations on reason for injury.
- Very young children with injuries on the back of the body from the neck to the knees.

Sexual Abuse and Exploitation

- Child makes statement about sexual activities with parents, other relatives, friends of the family, or other adults.
- Child shows an early and/or exaggerated awareness of sex, with either seductive interest or fearful avoidance of close contact with others.
- Child is known to be a victim of other forms of abuse.
- Bloody underclothing or tearing/bruising of the mouth, anus, or genitals.

Emotional Abuse

- Child is withdrawn, depressed, apathetic, and tends to “act out.”
- Displays signs of emotional turmoil such as repetitive, rhythmic movement; no verbal or physical communication.
- Parent or guardian refers to the child continually as “it” (“it cried”, etc.).

What Is Child Abuse?

Child abuse is legally defined as “any act of omission or commission that endangers or impairs a child’s physical or emotional health and development.”

These acts include:

- Physical abuse and corporal punishment resulting in an injury
- Emotional abuse
- Emotional deprivation
- Physical neglect and/or inadequate supervision
- Sexual abuse and exploitation

You Can Help

Your involvement does not mean physical intervention. It does not mean snooping on your neighbors. It simply means a willingness to help by recognizing the obvious signs. For instance, the frightened child next door, the unusually withdrawn child, or the child who is not ill but is not in school.

Reporting Abuse

The law requires certain professions to report suspicion and/or knowledge of child abuse. But kids also need the help of neighbors and friends.

Child abuse can be reported to law enforcement, county welfare offices, and in some counties, probation departments. If you are uncertain about reporting suspected abuse, call your community’s child abuse council hotline for advice. You do not have to give your name.